

El Toro

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Summary: The Italy brothers come over to Spain's house to find him sick! And they quickly learn that a sick Spain is a dangerous Spain...

## 1. Spain's Sick!

Spain sighed and studied his face in the mirror. His eyes were glazed over by a sheen on bright, rheumy tears, his normally olive complexion pale save the deep blush across his cheekbones. His chin bore a bit of shadow, which was unusual since normally he shaved every day, but the raw skin underneath his nose and the dark circles outlining his eyes explained it all.

Yes, Spain was sick. No, there wasn't much he could do about it. Romano and Italy were coming over later and he hadn't seen his "babies" in months! There was no way he was going to miss them. He ran his fingers through his dark hair and laid a hand on his forehead. So he could have probably fried an egg on it; so what? He was still going to give the Italian brothers a great day! Sweet memories of two brunette children with matching curls flying kites with him, drawing pictures with him, and calling him "big brother" made him feel peacefully nostalgic.

But when the doorbell rang he nearly jumped out of his skin, shivering. "H-h-hatchoo! H-hola," he responded to its call, his voice gravelly. He tried to cough it back into existence but it didn't really help. He opened the door and greeted Romano and Italy with a huge smile, despite feeling like such crap. "Como estas, mi hermanitos?"

"Ve, big brother Spain's voice sounds-a funny~!" Italy giggled, but Roma's eyes narrowed.

"You okay, tomato bastard?" Spain wasn't hurt by the name; Roma always called him something like that.

"Si, I'm-" he coughed "-I'm fine."

Romano looked unconvinced for the moment but said nothing. Italy started looking through Spain's fridge. "Ve, got any pasta?"

"Idiota, he's always got-a pasta!" Romano handed Italy a bowl and Spain moaned softly. Just the sight of food made his stomach roil.

"Big brother-a Spain, are you okay?" Italy pouted in concern, his eyes so wide as to almost be open. "You sound-a sick."

"Gracias, Italy, but I feel fine." The coughing fit that followed contradicted Spain's words, and Romano put a hand on the sick nation's forehead. He was burning.

"You've got a fever, stupid," he sighed, making Spain blush and look at his feet, feeling like an idiot for letting the brothers over while he was sick. He'd just missed them so much, and he didn't feel quite this sick earlierâ€|

Italy saw Spain's embarrassment and intervened, taking his "older brother's" arm and leading him upstairs to bed, the "mother hen" side of him making an appearance. He pulled up the blankets and let him step in, kissing his forehead affectionately like Spain used to do when Italy was little. "Let's-a get you warm and cozy and I'll-a take good care of you, ve~!"

Romano was less accommodating. He walked into the room and practically shoved a thermometer at him. "Keep-a your mouth closed, idiota," he ordered, making Spain obey meekly. This worried Romano a little, and he waited impatiently for the small device to be done. \_"Don't \_chew on it!"

When it was done reading Spain's temperature Romano frowned at the results. "102? Mio dio, Spain, why didn't you-a tell me you were that-a sick? Idiota!"

Spain blushed, wiping his mouth where he had drooled on the thermometer. "Lo sientoâ€|" A little tear formed in his eye; Spain was always more sensitive when he was sick. "I- I just missed you and Feli so much and didn't know when I'd see you two againâ€|"

Italy instantly dried Spain's tears with a handkerchief, putting a finger to his lips. "Roma's just-a worried about you big brother, don't-a cryâ€|" He looked at Romano as if to say, "You could be nicer, y'knowâ€|"

Romano sighed and took Italy's handkerchief, wringing it out in cold water and laying it on Spain's forehead. "Get-a some sleep, Spain. I'll go to the store to get-a some medicine, si?"

Spain nodded, curling up under the blankets as he began to feel sleep tug at him again, even though he'd just recently woken up. "Gracias, Romanito. Gracias, Italy. Si."

Romano sighed and started the car, Italy sitting shotgun, tears in his eyes. "Fratello, you weren't-a very nice to big brother Spain!"

he sniffled as he buckled his seat belt. "He's-a sick, you know! He's always nice to us when we're-a sick!"

Romano hated it when Italy cried; it always made him feel guilty, even if he wasn't the reason for his younger brother's tears. "Listen, fratello, don't-a cry, si? I just get mad because Spain doesn't take-a care of himself! He's always doin'-a somethin' like this! He didn't even tell us he was sick!" In a smaller voice, as though he was ashamed to admit it, he added, "It makes-a me worry."

\_Ohhhâ€| \_That made sense. Sometimes when Italy's older brother acted mean or angry, he was actually just upset or sad. Italy followed him dutifully as he got some medication for Spain's fever and cough, along with some soup, and came back home.

"I hope big brother Spain is okay," Italy whispered as he and Romano climbed the stairs to the older nation's bedroom. Romano gasped as the door creaked open; the sheets on Spain's bed were messy and he was nowhere to be seen.

"Where is he?" he said frantically, more to himself than to Italy, and a voice from behind, a low, throaty growl, answered, "OlÃ©." Romano's heart leapt- not in a good way- and he whirled around to see Spain standing across from him, holding out a red blanket and sweating like mad, his face fever-red and eyes wild. "Torro," he coaxed.

\*\*To be continuedâ€|\*\*

## 2. You Ate Romano?

Spain bowed as he stepped into the stadium, smiling at the crowd who clapped and cheered his name. A few pretty seÃ±oritas waved at him, spreading their decorative fans and blowing him kisses. He wiped the sweat off his brow; for some reason he felt hotter than normal, and wished he'd drank a little more water today. He felt like he was in some sort of a haze, but he tried to get past it and focused his attention on the bull.

The bull entered the arena, but to Spain's shock, so did a second. It was smaller, young and energetic, and Spain felt a nervous thumping of his heart in his chest. Why were there two? What chance did any one person stand against two bulls? France and Prussia always told him that he shouldn't even face one. Was someone out to hurt him? His mind was all a blur.

Sighing, he bravely pulled out his red blanket and started swishing it in the air to attract the creatures. "Toro," he beckoned, and then amended himself. "Torosâ€|"

The smaller bull, instead of charging, approached him slowly, really gently, and nudged him on the shoulder in an attempt to push him onto his back. Spain's lung started contracting in frantic pants; what was it trying to do, make it easier to trample him?

"No, no, no!" he cried, waving the blanket away from his face, closing his eye then peeking one open to see what it would do. The bigger bull opened its mouth, and what happened next made Spain's

heart skip at least a beat or two. It spoke.

"Idiota!" The voice was Romano's. "You're-a sick, get back in bed!"

Spain felt his stomach lurch and the next thing he knew, he was heaving onto the arena's dusty ground, drawing gasps from the crowd. "You- you ate Romano!" he exclaimed to the animal, tears filling his eyes. "I can't-a believe you ate-a mi Romanito! Oh Romano!" He felt his knees give way beneath him and he sank to the ground, his frame wracked with pitiful sobs.

Sure, the Italian often caused him trouble as a kid. Sure he was foul-mouthed with a temper to match, but he was Spain's best friend in the whole world and he couldn't stand the thought of life without him. His little tomato, his Romanito

He felt the younger bull's hoof on him and Romano's voice whispering, "Spain, mio dio! No-a bull ate me! I'm here! There's-a no bull." He chuckled fondly. "Don't-a cry, si?"

Spain's eyes narrowed. He'd never known a bull to act so human, but he'd show it he wasn't stupid! "Enough!" He stood up, feeling oddly dizzy, and somehow managed to push the massive creature aside. Adrenaline from anger, he assumed. "You'll pay for what you did for Romano, you hear me! You'll pay!"

"Oh, Spain," a higher voice sobbed as something cold passed across his forehead, making him shiver. His heart dropped to his gut, where it continued pounding.

"You-you ate Feli, too?"

\*\*To be continued again

### 3. When I Was Your Age I Was A Conquistador

Romano and Italy looked at each other in panic. Spain's eyes were open, yet clearly he was seeing hallucinations. They bore a glazed-no, a crazed look- that said he was going to avenge his brothers' "deaths" no matter how sick he was. Romano grimaced at the vomit on the floor and knew they needed a plan.

"Spain, it's-a me," Italy told him gently, his lower lip trembling as he tried to hold the bigger nation down. "I'm not a bull. You have a really high fever so you're just-a seein' things. It's Feli," he added, using his human name to really get through to him. He touched the Spaniard's forehead again; it was a lot hotter than before.

"Fratello, we-a need some Ibuprofen!" he shouted to Romano, feeling the panicked need to raise his voice despite his older brother being right there.

Romano would never admit this out loud, but he was quite relieved that Italy was here to help. There were plenty of areas in which the younger Vargas seemed to do nothing but cause trouble, but when someone was sick and in need of a caretaker, Italy's help was quite appreciated. Somehow the young nation seemed to suddenly gain a much

clearer head and capable nature in times like this.

"Si! Ibruprofen!" Too frantic to care or notice that Italy had actually been authoritative, Roma ran downstairs to get the medicine, leaving his younger brother to take care of Spain.

Spain had settled down for a moment but suddenly gripped his hand with frightening intensity. "Cabin boy!" He coughed. "Tell the men to bury my treasure under that hut in the Bahamas. You know which one!"

Oh great! Now he thought he was back in his pirate days! Italy blinked back some tears and tried to be tough. "Spain, I-a told you, it's Italy!" He spoke to him the way Grandpa Rome used to speak when any one of them was sick or upset as a child, running his fingers through Spain's dark curls as he did so. "You're sick, so Roma and I are-a here to take care of you." He didn't bother to ask if Spain remembered the happenings of earlier that day; obviously he didn't. Yes, Italy could be calm and practical in certain situations.

"Italy?" Spain almost sounded drunk.

"Si, I'm here, big brother." Italy tried to put Spain in bed but wasn't strong enough. "Help me here, okay?" he said tenderly. Spain was coherent enough now to comply, and let Italy put him to bed and lay a cool cloth on his forehead, dabbing at the beads of sweat that had collected on his hairline.

Romano came back in with the Ibruprofen and some cough syrup and was relieved to find Spain in bed. "I think-a he's sleeping now," he noted, and dipped the spoon in the medicine.

"Big brother Spain? Romano's got-a your medicine so you'll have to open up, all right?" Italy cooed. Spain was just awake enough to meekly comply, and the brothers managed to get his medicine down him. The sick nation was starting to breathe a little easier and so were Italy and Romano- until the next words from Spain's mouth.

"Grazie, men, all the others would commit mutiny but you stayed to help your dying captain."

\*\*To be continued\*\*

#### 4. Not Like I Care or Anything

Italy's lower lip trembled for a moment and Romano held his breath. "No, Ita!" If he cried it might upset Spain in his feverish state and make everything worse. But once Italy let out a little pained squeak Romano knew the floodgates had burst. The younger Vargas started crying and protesting. "B-big brother Spain don't-a die we need you!" He shook Spain's shoulders and the sick nation was only saved because Romano saw the greensick look begin to appear on his face.

He grabbed Italy by the collar and spun him around to face him. "Don't make-a things worse, stupid!" He turned back to Spain, who was starting to look a little crazed again and struggling to sit up, and cursed under his breath. "Come on, tomato bastard, you're just-a

makin' yourself sicker," he sighed, pushing Spain back down with very little effort.

"T-Toroâ€|?" Spain's voice was weak and confused, not to mention rusty from disuse. Romano sighed and looked at Italy, sitting on the edge of Spain's bed. "Fratello, get-a the tomato bastard a glass of water."

"Si!" Italy sniffled away the last of his tears and gave a little salute, walking downstairs to the kitchen. Romano grabbed the thermometer and tucked it in between Spain's lips again, feeling an odd burning sensation in his eyes and the need to sniffle. Dammit, was he getting sick too?

Spain's eyes fluttered back open just then and he tried to talk around the thermometer. "L-Lovi?"

"Don't-a talk when I'm taking your temperature, stupid," Romano said, noticing that his voice suddenly sounded thick. \_And don't call me Lovi, \_he thought, but actually didn't say so.

"But-but you're cryingâ€|" Spain choked a little and shut his mouth obediently.

"Crying? I'm not-oh." Romano felt the wetness on his cheeks now and felt like an idiot; he hadn't even known he was crying. And he'd always said Spain was thick! He felt his cheeks flame like a match being struck. "Well- I-I was-a worried about you all right? Not like I really-a care, it's just who would-a take care of all the tomatoes in the garden, huh? Stupid Spain."

The thermometer went off and Romano took it into his hand and looked at the screen. No change. "You still have a fever," he sighed, "go back-a to sleep, idiota."

Spain smiled sleepily and, to Romano's consternation, reached up and tousled his hair. "You know you're still my little tomatoâ€| you get all upset and try to act like you're fine just like when you were littleâ€| still my little Romanoâ€|" He coughed harshly and smiled again, snuggling into his blankets and shivering a little.

Italy came back with the water and manage to cajole Spain into drinking just enough liquid to soothe his sore throat. "Here big brother Spain-a, this will make you feel a lot-a better!" he sang, ever cheerful, as he sort of gave the other nation no choice by pouring it into his mouth without warning, making Spain choke a little. Romano shook his head and sighed. "Come on, fratello, let's-a go downstairs and make-a some soup. I guess we gotta \_feed \_the bastardo." But there was an undertone of affectionate teasing in his tone and Spain chuckled as he drifted off to sleep. \_"Te Ã¡mo tambiÃ©n, Romanitoâ€|" \_he whispered.

**\*\*Two weeks laterâ€|\*\***

"And then there was the time I faced a talking bullâ€|"

"Spain, how many times do I have to tell you that was a hallucination?!"

"Hush, Roma, you're ruining the story!"

**\*\*The End(: Hope you liked it:\*\***

End  
file.